

In eight years, nearly 90,000 Kentuckians earned a GED diploma, ranking Kentucky 12th highest nationally in the percentage of non-high school completers earning a GED diploma.

Nationally and in other southern states, GED graduates have been steadily increasing. In calendar year 2008, there were approximately 469,000 GED graduates which is a 9% increase from calendar year 2007 (429,000). However, Kentucky had a 9% decrease in GED graduates from fiscal year 2008 to fiscal year 2009.

In order to continue raising the educational level of the Commonwealth, improve the quality of life, and increase economic development, Kentucky needs to begin addressing raising the average GED standard scores. Raising the scores on the GED Tests so that students are better prepared for postsecondary education and/or higher quality employment is of increasing importance.

In the United States, as well as Kentucky, the average standard scores are lowest in Math and Writing. For the last seven years Kentucky's average standard scores in Math, Reading and Writing have been lower than the national average (Graphs 6-8).

Contact Information:

Marilyn Lyons
Senior Associate for Data Analysis,
Research and System Support
502-573-5114, ext. 261
Marilyn.Lyons@ky.gov

Table of Contents

GED® Fiscal Year Statistics	2
Percent Change in Number of GED® Graduates by Fiscal Year.....	3
GED® Pass Rate by Fiscal Year	3
GED® Graduates by Age and Fiscal Year.....	4
National and Kentucky Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Graduates.....	5
GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year.....	7
GED® Non-Passers by Age and Fiscal Year.....	7
Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year.....	8
Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Graduates for Fiscal Year 2008-09 by County.....	10
GED® Pass Rate by County.....	14

Data represented on pages 10-14 of this research brief are specific to county programs. The data used to generate this research brief are from the following sources: AERIN, NRSpro, GED Testing Service and the U.S. Census.

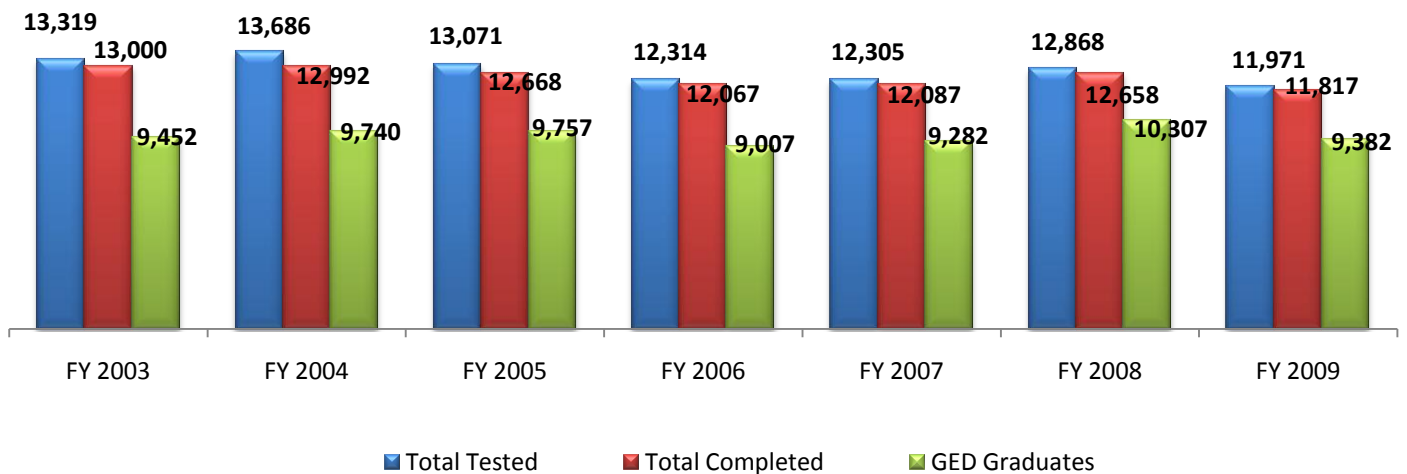
It is important to avoid over-interpretation of average scores and pass rates at the county level. For example, a county that has a higher pass rate than another county may reflect natural variability due to a small number of GED graduates.

The intentions of this research brief are to provide trend information at the state level and national comparisons and to assist programs in making informed educational and policy decisions at the local level.

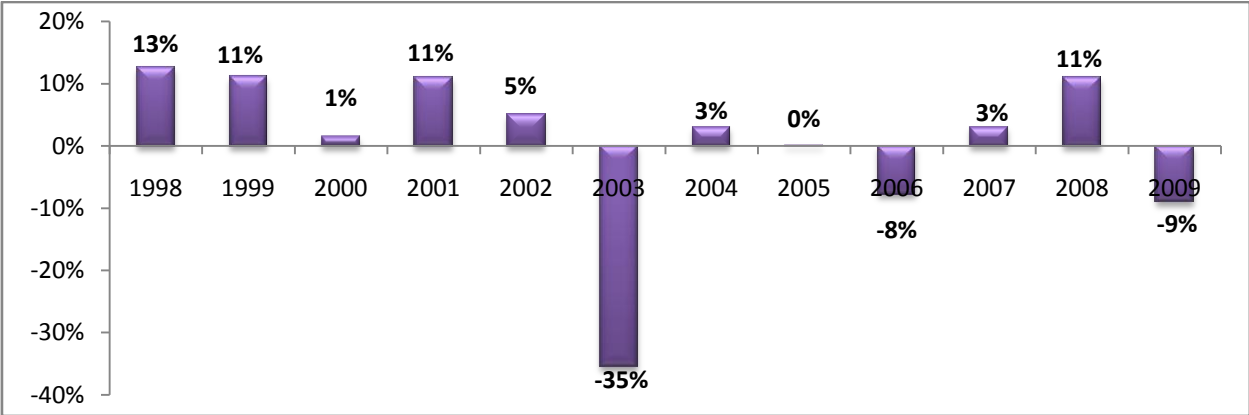
Definitions of Terms

- Mean score is calculated by dividing the sum of the standard scores by the total number of standard scores.
- Pass rate is calculated by dividing the number of GED graduates by the number of completed GED Tests.
- GED graduates completed all five subject batteries with a standard score total of 2,250 (average of 450 per test) and a passing standard score of 410 on each of the subject batteries.
- GED non-passers completed all 5 subject batteries but either did not have a minimum standard score of 2250 and/or a standard score of 410 on one or more subject batteries.

Graph 1: GED® Fiscal Year Statistics for Kentucky

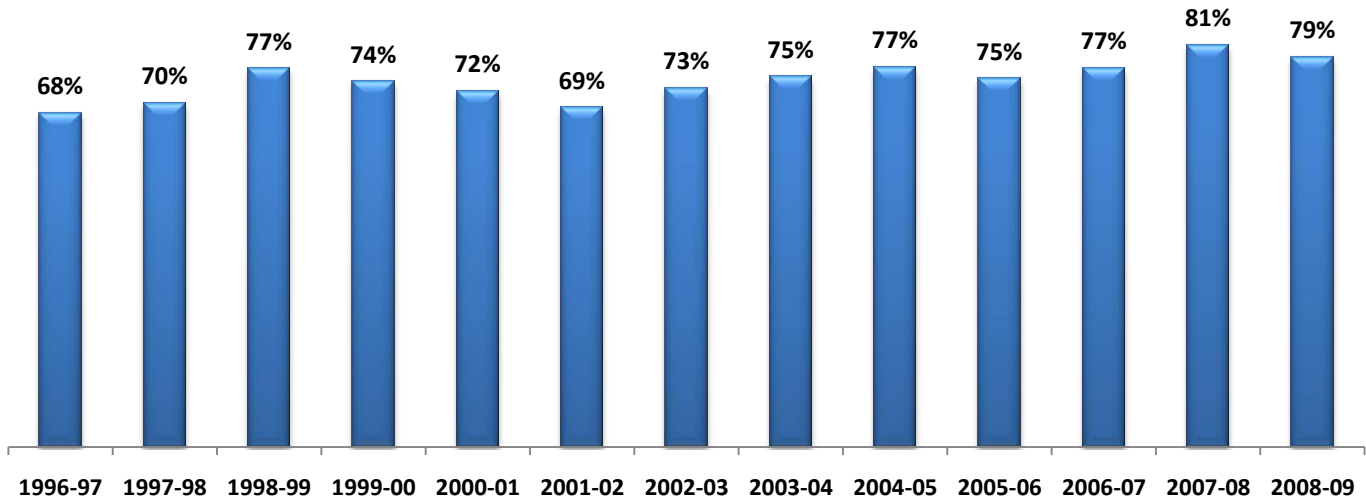


Graph 2: Percent Change in Number of GED® Graduates by Fiscal Year



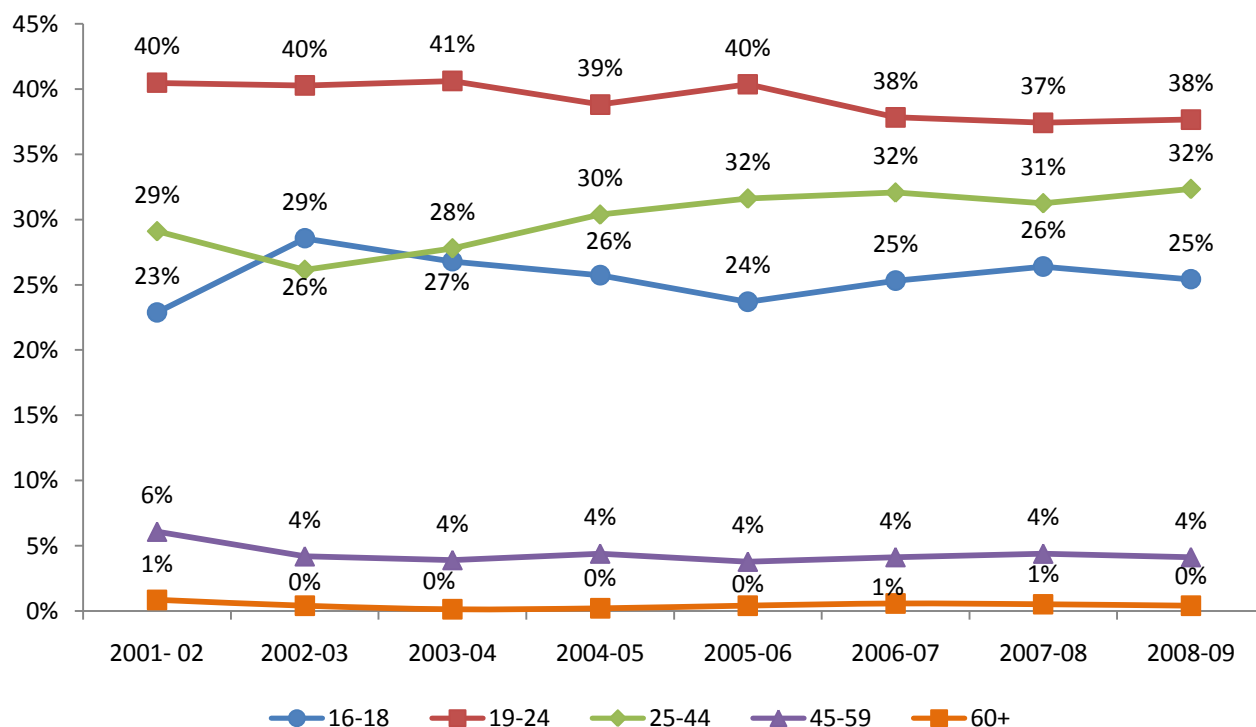
Graph 2 represents the percent change in the number of GED graduates over time. Typically, Kentucky has had an increase in GED graduates for each fiscal year except for fiscal year 2003, 2005 and 2009. The 35% decrease in fiscal year 2002-03 is due to the GED Tests changing in 2002.

Graph 3: GED® Pass Rate by Fiscal Year



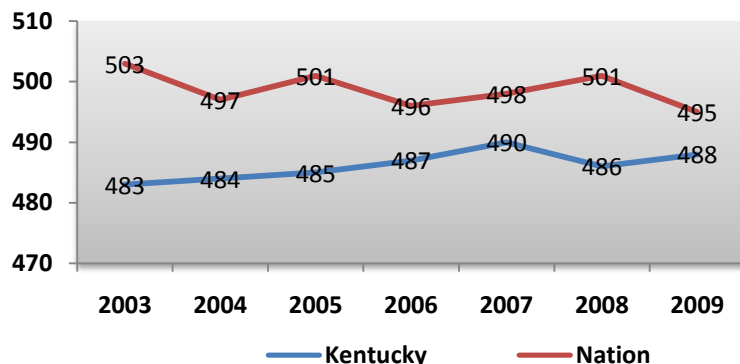
The pass rate in Kentucky has typically been 70% or higher (graph 3). Test readiness certification is required before taking the GED Tests. Applicants are required to achieve the same scores on the OPT as required to pass the GED Tests, a minimum standard score of at least 410 on each sub-test and an average of 450 on the OPT. Applicants may not be certified as “test ready” until all sub-tests have been passed.

Graph 4: GED® Graduates by Age and Fiscal Year



The majority of GED graduates have remained between the ages of 19-24 from fiscal year 2002 to 2009. The age cohort 25-44 has been the second largest producer of GED graduates except for fiscal year 2002-03.

Although the GED Tests are available for adults of all ages, candidates ages 45 and older make up the smallest group of candidates, at 4-5%.

Graph 5: Kentucky's Mathematics Mean Scores for GED® Graduates

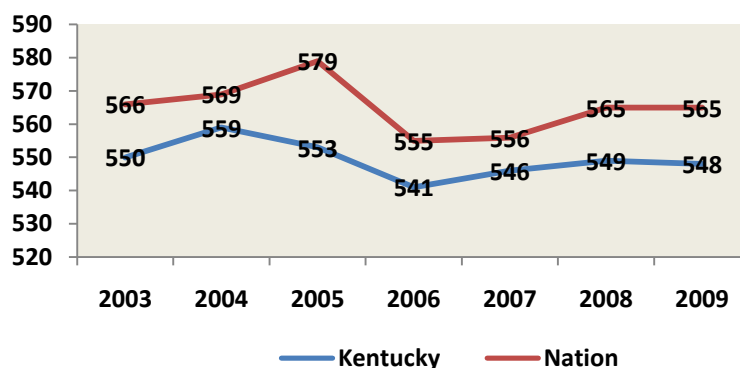
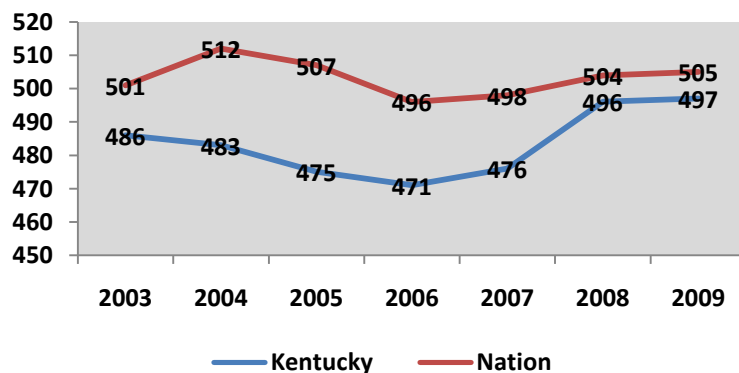
Kentucky's subject battery scores in mathematics, reading and writing tend to be lower than the nation for fiscal years 2002-03 to 2008-09.

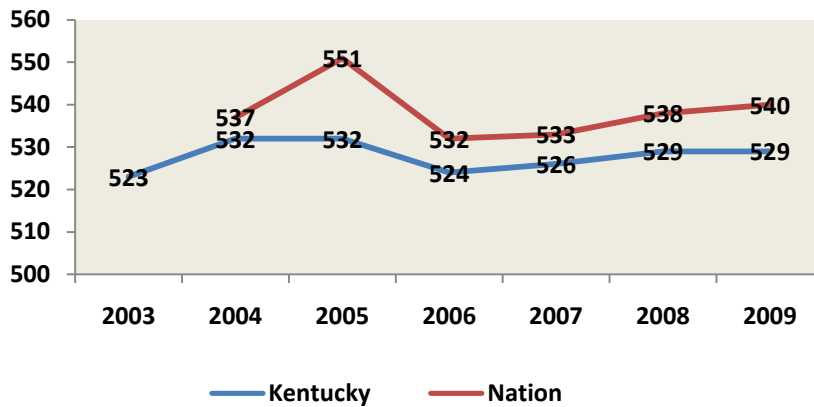
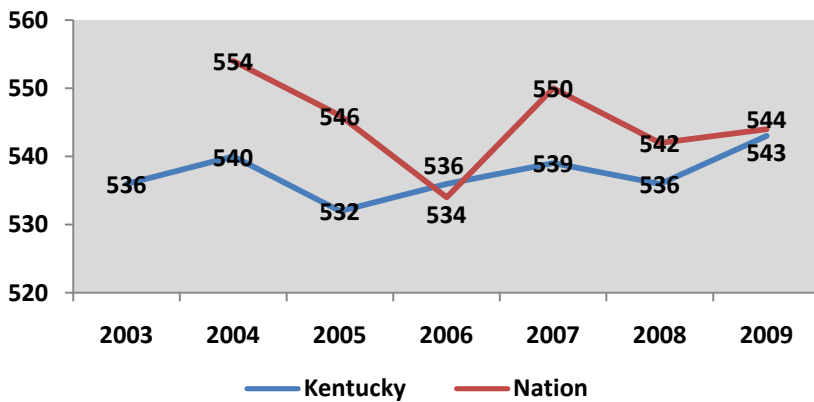
The national mathematics mean score decreased from 2008 to 2009, however, it slightly increased in Kentucky. Kentucky's mathematics mean score has consistently been lower than the nation's. The mean score in mathematics for GED graduates was 488 in Kentucky and 495 in the nation for fiscal year 2009.

Kentucky's reading mean score is lower than the nation's and decreased slightly from fiscal year 2008 to 2009. The mean score in reading for GED graduates was 548 in Kentucky and 565 in the nation for fiscal year 2009.

Kentucky's mean score in writing has increased steadily since 2007, however still remains lower than the national average. The mean score in writing for GED graduates was 497 in Kentucky and 505 in the nation for fiscal year 2009.

The Mathematics and Writing tests continue to be the two most difficult tests as indicated by the low mean standard scores.

Graph 6: Kentucky's Reading Mean Scores for GED® GraduatesGraph 7: Kentucky's Writing Mean Scores for GED® Graduates

Graph 8: Kentucky's Social Studies Mean Scores for GED® GraduatesGraph 9: Kentucky's Science Mean Scores for GED® Graduates

Kentucky's mean score in social studies decreased in 2006 but has slightly been increasing since the decline, however still remains lower than the national average. The mean score in social studies for GED graduates was 529 in Kentucky and 540 in the nation for fiscal year 2009.

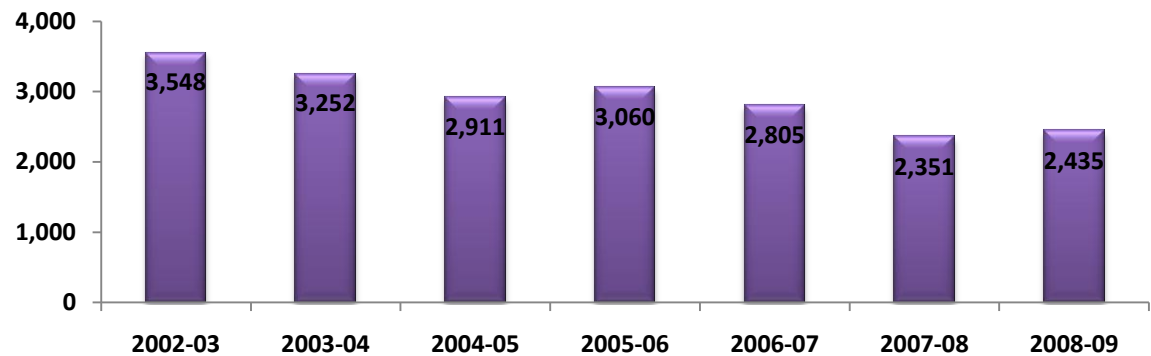
Kentucky's mean score in science experienced less variance than the national mean score which has decreased twice. In 2006, Kentucky's science mean score (536) was higher than the national science mean score (534). Although, the national science mean score increased in 2007 it decreased in 2008 and only slightly increased in 2009. Kentucky's mean score in science increased slightly in 2009 to 543 and the national mean score in science is 544.

Who is not passing the GED Tests?

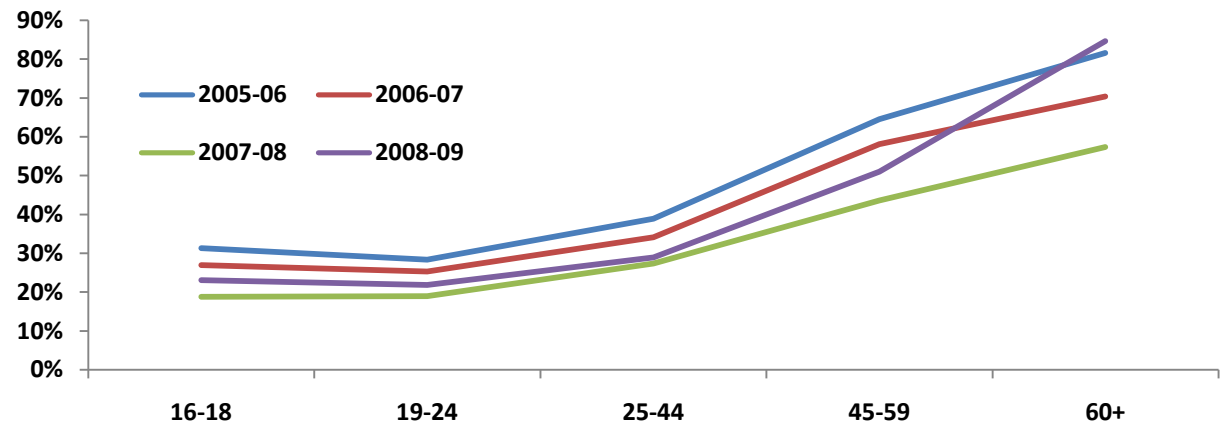
The number of non-passers has decreased over time. In fiscal year 2005-06, 25% of test-takers did not pass the GED Tests whereas in fiscal year 2008-09 only 21% of test-takers did not pass the GED Tests. The number of non-passers increases with age (graph 12). On average from fiscal year 2005-06 to 2008-09,

- 25% of the cohorts age 16-24 did not pass the GED;
- 32% of the cohort age 25-44 did not pass the GED;
- 54% of the cohort age 45-59 did not pass and
- 72% of the 60 and older cohort did not pass the GED.

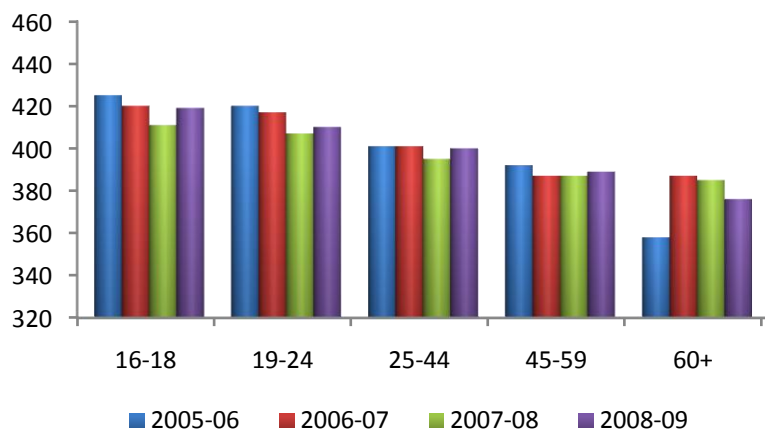
Graph 10: GED® Non-passers by Fiscal Year



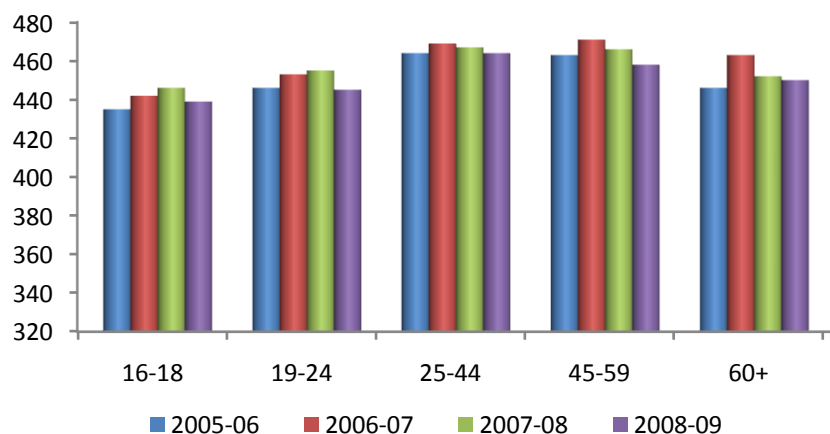
Graph 11: GED® Non-passers by Age and Fiscal Year



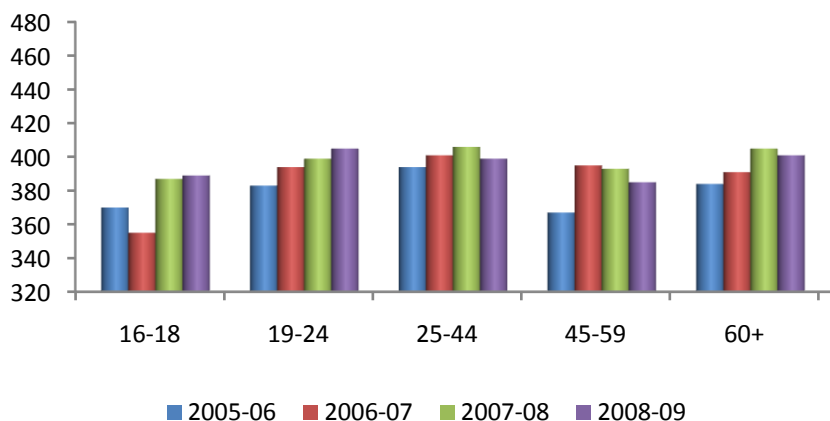
Graph 12: Mean Mathematics Scores for GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year



Graph 13: Mean Reading Scores for GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year



Graph 14: Mean Writing Scores for GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year

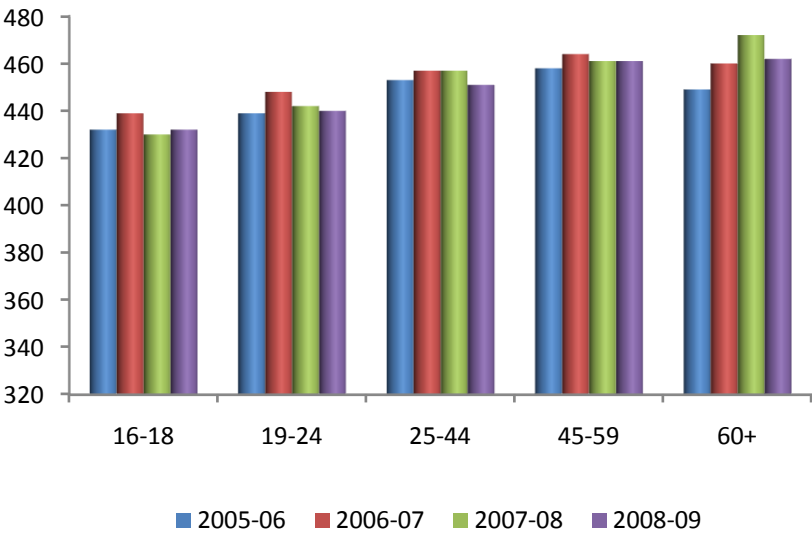


The mean mathematics scores for non-passers decrease with age. The age cohorts 16-24 have higher mathematics mean scores than age cohorts 25 and older. On average the cohort age 25 and older tends to score below 410 on the mathematics battery.

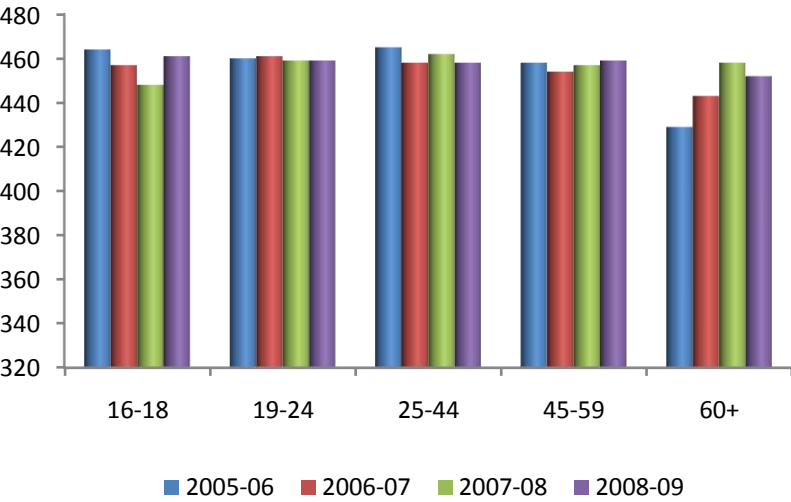
The mean reading scores for non-passers tends to be higher for age cohorts 25-44 and 45-59. On average students score above the minimum requirement of 410 on the reading battery.

The mean writing scores for non-passers tends to be highest for age cohort 25-44. The age cohort 16-18 has the lowest mean scores of any other age cohort. The writing battery is one of the most difficult tests as evidenced in the low mean scores in graph 14. On average all cohorts score below 410 on the writing battery.

Graph 15: Mean Social Studies Scores for GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year



Graph 16: Mean Science Scores for GED® Non-Passers by Fiscal Year



The mean social studies scores for non-passers tend to increase with age. Social studies mean scores tend to be above the minimum 410 requirement.

Science mean scores for non-passers tend to be higher than on any other subject battery test. All age cohorts tend to score above the 410 minimum requirements.

Table 1: GED® Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Graduates for Fiscal Year 2008-09 by County

County	Number	Writing	Social Studies	Science	Reading	Mathematics
Adair	57	491	527	550	534	500
Allen	84	476	514	530	542	473
Anderson	31	495	527	562	574	486
Ballard	17	498	511	543	509	485
Barren	88	500	527	541	541	495
Bath	18	496	538	533	578	473
Bell	64	498	519	536	533	469
Boone	145	517	555	573	580	512
Bourbon	56	512	498	523	509	481
Boyd	57	521	539	545	568	490
Boyle	48	475	551	570	558	496
Bracken	21	482	505	544	526	489
Breathitt	69	491	516	545	536	487
Breckinridge	60	483	531	543	533	489
Bullitt	135	501	537	563	559	499
Butler	25	471	520	556	522	482
Caldwell	15	446	475	499	489	459
Calloway	34	508	535	560	581	508
Campbell	225	488	530	549	546	494
Carlisle	4	528	488	543	540	493
Carroll	40	467	506	528	498	476
Carter	55	484	527	541	553	470
Casey	60	497	501	516	546	458
Christian	159	497	512	532	525	481
Clark	70	521	536	563	566	497
Clay	93	474	515	525	521	474
Clinton	30	472	519	539	533	489
Crittenden	35	517	529	545	553	481
Cumberland	10	544	548	583	563	515

Table 1: GED® Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Graduates for Fiscal Year 2008-09 by County

County	Number	Writing	Social Studies	Science	Reading	Mathematics
Daviess	164	510	533	545	562	483
Edmonson	19	518	543	542	553	486
Elliott	9	513	531	539	569	473
Estill	51	501	516	531	543	479
Fayette	321	521	550	553	569	510
Fleming	11	470	487	514	516	485
Floyd	42	486	522	545	550	500
Franklin	119	492	520	524	538	475
Fulton	15	487	519	537	529	495
Gallatin	21	464	519	546	505	493
Garrard	37	481	540	549	560	482
Grant	46	497	539	562	548	501
Graves	37	509	555	561	568	495
Grayson	74	485	523	533	525	486
Green	33	478	533	543	545	479
Greenup	45	494	524	544	529	494
Hancock	17	494	546	556	577	515
Hardin	196	501	538	561	556	498
Harlan	45	517	540	549	579	490
Harrison	27	502	532	553	559	486
Hart	38	502	525	546	540	488
Henderson	94	501	535	546	557	493
Henry	23	507	545	552	557	489
Hickman	4	538	568	545	618	488
Hopkins	106	514	546	555	565	501
Jackson	44	485	511	543	518	479
Jefferson	849	505	541	551	563	499
Jessamine	68	518	550	565	576	515
Johnson	37	510	531	556	541	489
Kenton	200	497	533	547	551	489
Knott	16	481	508	548	520	488

Table 1: GED® Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Graduates for Fiscal Year 2008-09 by County

County	Number	Writing	Social Studies	Science	Reading	Mathematics
Knox	52	490	506	533	515	457
Larue	21	484	538	558	537	511
Laurel	144	500	528	549	549	492
Lawrence	23	514	559	576	567	510
Lee	43	474	516	528	534	471
Leslie	12	473	503	528	509	468
Letcher	37	513	526	541	545	489
Lewis	45	489	510	536	516	493
Lincoln	61	488	535	547	549	481
Livingston	3	507	563	510	633	500
Logan	42	498	517	529	537	471
Lyon	46	490	529	542	567	480
Madison	94	505	543	551	553	491
Magoffin	21	483	537	561	562	492
Marion	65	482	511	529	540	490
Marshall	19	516	547	578	562	531
Martin	13	523	515	545	587	476
Mason	77	490	536	543	537	492
McCracken	176	515	536	555	560	493
McCreary	61	494	520	526	542	475
McLean	10	480	541	548	561	471
Meade	43	486	527	550	533	487
Menifee	13	478	510	518	557	469
Mercer	24	484	539	546	548	490
Metcalfe	34	488	525	532	517	486
Monroe	29	513	543	557	549	495
Montgomery	63	501	540	556	541	488
Morgan	57	484	520	537	548	482
Muhlenberg	52	494	543	568	560	493

Table 1: GED® Mean Scores by Subject Battery for GED® Graduates for Fiscal Year 2008-09 by County

County	Number	Writing	Social Studies	Science	Reading	Mathematics
Nelson	86	499	518	533	538	479
Nicholas	9	482	493	493	489	447
Ohio	43	477	516	540	543	485
Oldham	66	514	551	558	556	491
Owen	15	510	540	563	585	488
Owsley	5	458	516	520	524	460
Pendleton	22	509	547	555	560	491
Perry	52	499	537	551	569	484
Pike	106	508	526	547	533	479
Powell	61	458	511	530	523	467
Pulaski	139	491	529	544	553	472
Robertson	2	500	480	580	540	450
Rockcastle	26	492	520	543	549	494
Rowan	49	503	519	546	550	482
Russell	41	523	534	539	554	494
Scott	104	494	533	534	546	482
Shelby	70	507	547	547	556	492
Simpson	59	502	537	554	559	495
Spencer	9	507	548	544	552	477
Taylor	71	507	513	527	545	478
Todd	27	506	539	561	567	499
Trigg	21	473	516	543	543	490
Trimble	6	522	522	520	548	488
Union	12	563	572	556	616	505
Warren	169	508	536	548	557	490
Washington	35	494	537	539	555	485
Wayne	67	491	511	529	517	471
Webster	34	509	516	552	550	476
Whitley	91	499	521	547	540	495
Wolfe	13	465	522	523	562	462
Woodford	20	492	516	545	555	475

Table 2: GED® Pass Rate for Fiscal Year 2008-09 by County

County	Pass Rate	County	Pass Rate	County	Pass Rate
Adair	88%	Garrard	79%	McLean	91%
Allen	92%	Grant	87%	Meade	75%
Anderson	86%	Graves	80%	Menifee	72%
Ballard	77%	Grayson	78%	Mercer	92%
Barren	93%	Green	75%	Metcalfe	87%
Bath	82%	Greenup	85%	Monroe	71%
Bell	80%	Hancock	94%	Montgomery	89%
Boone	88%	Hardin	91%	Morgan	61%
Bourbon	84%	Harlan	80%	Muhlenberg	95%
Boyd	97%	Harrison	90%	Nelson	87%
Boyle	87%	Hart	79%	Nicholas	82%
Bracken	88%	Henderson	84%	Ohio	75%
Breathitt	68%	Henry	88%	Oldham	89%
Breckinridge	75%	Hickman	100%	Owen	75%
Bullitt	89%	Hopkins	91%	Owsley	71%
Butler	78%	Jackson	86%	Pendleton	88%
Caldwell	88%	Jefferson	82%	Perry	95%
Calloway	94%	Jessamine	86%	Pike	89%
Campbell	86%	Johnson	80%	Powell	78%
Carlisle	67%	Kenton	86%	Pulaski	87%
Carroll	78%	Knott	94%	Robertson	100%
Carter	63%	Knox	63%	Rockcastle	76%
Casey	83%	Larue	81%	Rowan	78%
Christian	69%	Laurel	78%	Russell	89%
Clark	95%	Lawrence	82%	Scott	86%
Clay	79%	Lee	81%	Shelby	83%
Clinton	77%	Leslie	80%	Simpson	95%
Crittenden	88%	Letcher	86%	Spencer	100%
Cumberland	77%	Lewis	78%	Taylor	81%
Daviess	93%	Lincoln	79%	Todd	77%
Edmonson	95%	Livingston	60%	Trigg	78%
Elliott	75%	Logan	76%	Trimble	55%
Estill	88%	Lyon	81%	Union	86%
Fayette	86%	Madison	82%	Warren	89%
Fleming	69%	Magoffin	84%	Washington	85%
Floyd	89%	Marion	87%	Wayne	73%
Franklin	80%	Marshall	100%	Webster	94%
Fulton	75%	Martin	93%	Whitley	76%
Gallatin	81%	Mason	73%	Wolfe	68%
		McCracken	90%	Woodford	95%
		McCreary	79%		